

E
1227

Bay 4
Box 943/2

1950

1

S. E. ASIA
EASTERN
BRUNEI

No. 59726

SUBJECT SULTAN OF BRUNEI

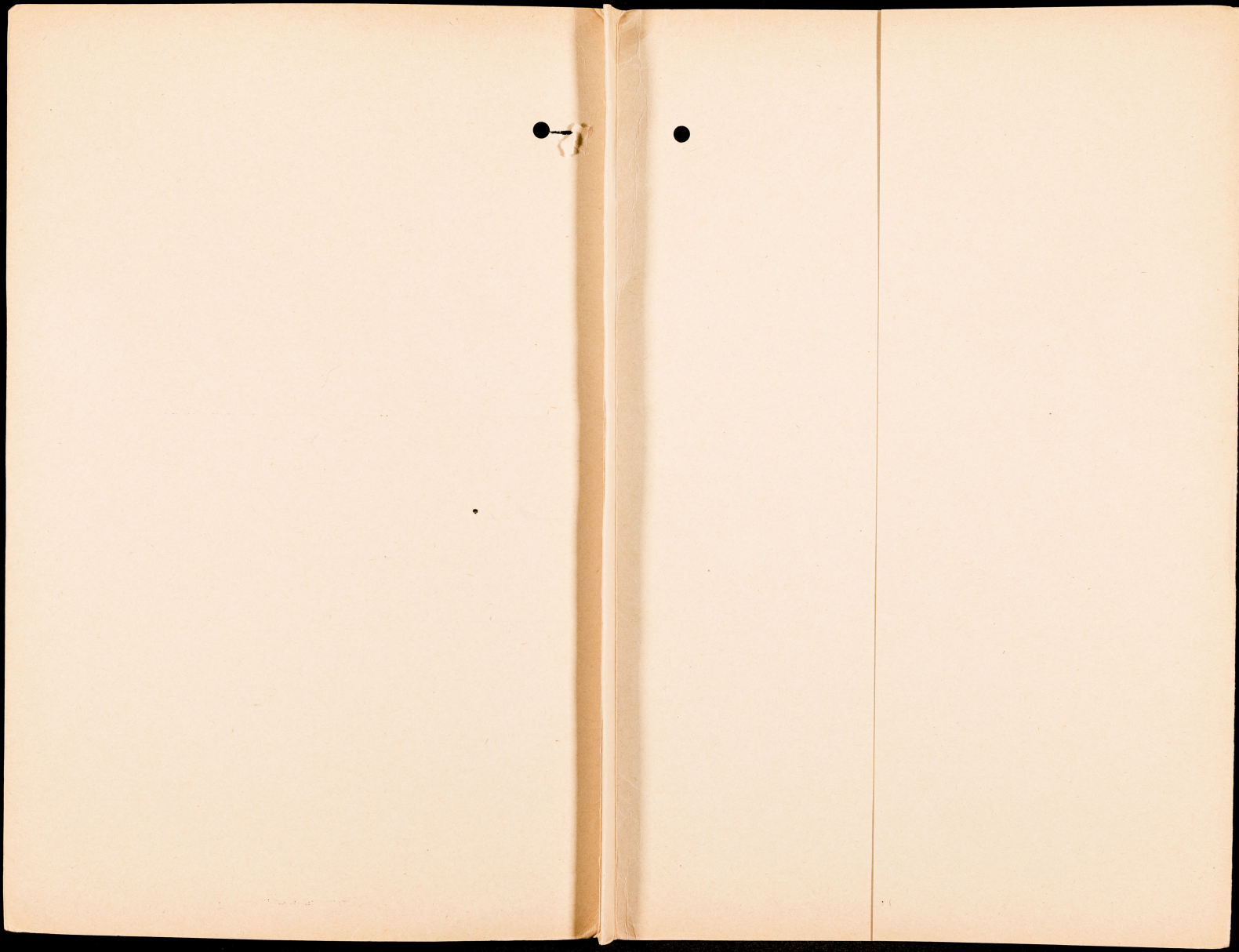
Pengiran Omar Ali Saifudin

CLOSED
UNTIL
1981

Previous /	
Subsequent	

CO 943/2/12

✓



1 S'WAK TELE 175 — 6. 6. 50.

Draft for approval is opposite.

M. Scott.
7/6

2 Press cuttings (MacBryan's protest) — 8. 6. 50.

3. To H.C. for Brunei. Tel No 22
To Col Com Singapore. Tel No 299
To Resident Brunei ~~Tel No.~~ } cons $\frac{8}{6}$
50

4. To Brunei tel. No. 23 — 9. 6. 50

5. TEL. — MACBRYAN TO H.M.

Draft tel. arising out of (5) is attached.

M. Scott
9/6

6 To High Com^d Brunei — Tel No 24
7 Comd General — Tel 302
8 British Resident Brunei — dated } $\frac{9}{6}$
50

9. BRUNEI TELE 32 — 9. 6. 50.

10. C.G. SEA TEL 141 CONF — 10. 6. 50

11. BRUNEI TEL 33 CONF — 12. 6. 50

12 C.G. SEA SAV 55 — 8. 6. 50

13. S'WAK TEL 181 — 10. 6. 50
(ORIG 26635/1/6/1950)

Sir G. Whiteley.

Replies to our tels. at (3) (4) and (6/8) are at (9) (14) and (11) respectively.

2. We wanted to know the succession procedure and customs, and although none of the replies to our enquiries give a categorical answer, I ~~at~~ interpret (14) in the following way:

1. Omar Ali was appointed Bendahara in July 1947. (It is not stated by whom he was appointed, but since there have been no protests since, we can presume the appointment was valid.)
2. On the death of the Sultan, the Council of Ministers met in accordance with customary procedure and unanimously recommended the appointment of the Bendahara to the Sultanate. (? the Bendahara is the official heir to the Sultan)
3. High Court approved the appointment in accordance with the Treaty of 1888.
4. Omar Ali was proclaimed at a ceremony in the Court House in Brunei.

3. Such would seem to be the customary procedure. No further action by us seems called for until MacBryan takes action, when it may be necessary to verify the suppositions in § 2 above.

Presumably by
the late Sultan.

In the meantime, the High Coma seems 4
satisfied about the position (see X on (9) & (11)).

14. Com Gen's tel at (10) gives information
about MacBryen's aims and line of action,
and copies of MacBryen's communications
to Com Gen should arrive soon (v. 3/13 of (10)).

5. ? No further action yet. Mr. Higham
should see.

M. Scott
16/6

Mr. Higham

We have now received some further inf. about
the selection of the new Sultan, but there are still
some details lacking: i.e. are definite rules
concerning the succession ^(+ if so what are they?) laid down? is succession
confined to a single family, & to what degree
of relationship? can a female succeed?

However, the High Coma will no doubt deal with
these points in his further comments which (11)
foreshadows. No action is required at present.

G.C. Witcher
16/6.

Pl. Parker

You may wish to see. ? put by.

Pl. 2/6

2/6
23/6

am

15

SWAK TEL 183 — 20. 6. 50
(ORIG 26635/6/50)

16 BRUNEI TEL 36 — 20. 6. 50.
(COPY ON 59620/50)

5

17. Com Can SEA TEL 150 — 24. 6. 50.
(COPY ON 59620/50)

I spoke to Mr. Haler about (17)
w.r.t para 2 he informs me that there have so far
not been any Press reactions. Private engineers have
expressed themselves as not surprised.

^{to Mr. Scott}
B. fwd. 1 week to engine developments.

G.C.W.

27/6

B.U. in min 27/6 above

~~4/7~~

Sir G. Whitley.

No further developments. ? Bring
up weekly.

Yes.

M. Scott. 4/7

G.C.W.

4/7 at once

B.U. in min. ^{4/7} above

~~4/7~~

Nothing further.

Another week.

MS 11/7

Bee. 5. minute 11/7

531 18/7.

Put by. M. Scott 18/7

18. PRESS EXTRACT —
(ORIG 58600/50)

26. 10. 50.

19. H.C. Borneo Sav 94 —
(ORIG 58600/50)

28. 10. 50

20. Borneo TEL W.N. 21. 4. 51
(ORIG ON 53002/114/51)

Sir G. Whiteley,

you mentioned to me the
matter of a message to the
Sultan of Borneo on the occasion
of his Coronation. According to
the latest information on Honours
files the Coronation is to take
place on May 10th.

I submit draft telegram

Atfield

2/5/51

The Coronation (a Installation) of the Sultan
of Borneo takes place on 10th May
~~At~~ H.N. on 1st May apptd. the Sultan
to be an Hon. C.M.G. to mark the occasion
& the High Commissioner is arranging
to invest him with the Insignia
during the celebrations. I think it would

be appropriate for the S. & S. to send a message of good wishes & congratulations.

2. There appears to be no exact precedent ~~from~~ from Malaya: but the practice there is different. When the local selection of a successor to a Sultanate has been made, I gather that the approval of the S. & S. is sought for the appointment & when formal approval is conveyed the opportunity is taken of sending a message of good wishes. In the case of Borneo the local selection was, in accordance with practice, approved by the High Commissioner & merely reported here. The S. & S. has not as yet offered his good wishes & the Coronation celebrations present a suitable opportunity for doing so.

3. There is no need I think for a message to be sent from the Palace on this occasion: when the Sultan had been duly proclaimed he sent an assurance of loyalty to H.M. at (13) & when acknowledging it the King sent a message of good wishes, see (15).

4. Draft Tely. for consider.

G. P. Whiteley

3/5.

21 To High Comd.
Brunner - Tsr 17 Comd. 5/7

Miss Whittaker

To note F.A. Draft (21)

HS31 7/5

NOTED PRECEDENTS

LB Whittaker 8/5/51

22. PRESS EXTRACT . 2. 5. 51

B

23 - From H.C.M. Bruner — 26/5/51.
Tel. No. 16.

Sir G. Whitley,

We spoke. A message
was sent by the H.M. when
the

the Sultan was elected. Your minute
of 3/5 refers.
? as in draft

H. Field

26/5/51

My min. of 3/5 is relevant.
I don't think we can ~~bring~~ H.M. again: after all there is nothing
he cd. add to (15). G.C. Whitely
26/5.

This self

~~He~~ Please have a word early
on Friday.

FM 26/5

Sir Lloyd

I am afraid I must trouble you
with Mr. MacDonald's suggestion in (23) that
the King should be asked to send a message to
the Sultan of Brunei for his coronation on 30th May.
In the short time available I have been able

10

to have only one precedent - the installation
of the Raja of Perlis in 1949. No message was
sent either by the King or the SFS.

? as in draft.

JM/25/5

After certain advice to
himself to look into
the precedents and
prepare a note for
the Precedent Book.
JM

I agree but have received his S/L
make it personal for myself
JL/28/5
28.

24 Bourne - Tel 21 Grafton - 28-5-51

himself

I am taking action as requested
by Mr. Higham.

JL/30/5

B

'Draft'

TELEGRAM/ *

* ~~SAVINGRAM~~

File No.

59726/51

* The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

~~Immediate Confidential~~

To:—

High Commissioner
RESIDENT BRUNEI.

Repeated to:—

Sent.

1630 hours.

28-5-1947

ry

C.O.

Mr. Nield 26/5
Sir G. Whiteley 26/5
Mr.

Mr. Higham 28/5

Sir

Priority:—

Nil

Reply urgently required.

Important.

X Immediate.

Most Immediate.

For transmission:—

In Clear

X Code

Cypher

No. 21

Restricted.

X Confidential.

Secret.

Top Secret
and Personal.

X Permt. U.S. of S. *W. Turner*
Parly. U.S. of S.
S. of S.

(23)

High Commissioner Kuching.

RECEIVED

28 MAY 1951

In Tel. C.O.

Distribution:—

NOT COPIED

Further action:—

High Commissioner's telegram No.16.

Following personal for MacDonald
from Lloyd. Begins.

So far as we have been able to
trace within time available it is not
repeat not the practice for H.M. to
send any message at installation of
Malayan Sultans and we see difficulty
in asking for an exception in this case
especially as His Majesty sent a message
of good wishes to the Sultan on the

occasion

occasion of his election (Secretary of State's telegram No.183 of 1950 to Governor Sarawak refers). If that were thought desirable reference could be made to that message during Coronation celebrations. Ends.

SECEP.

Draft
TELEGRAM / * * SAVINGRAM
* The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

File No.

13
59726/51

To:—

Resident Borneo

Sent.

hours.

194

Repeated to:—

Priority:—

Nil

Reply urgently required.

Important

Immediate

Most Immediate

To be transmitted:—

In Clear

Code

Cypher

No.

Restricted

Confidential

Secret

Top Secret
and Personal

C.O.

Mr. Nield 26/5

Mr. Sir G. W. H. 26

Mr. Higham 26/5

Mr. Blaxter

Sir

X Permt. U.S. of S.
Parly. U.S. of S.
S. of S.

High Commissioners Telegram

(23)
No. 16.

from Lloyd

personal
Following L for MACDONALD / BEGINS

His Majesty sent a message
of good wishes to the Sultan
on the occasion of his
election (My telegram No 183¹⁹⁵⁰
to Govt Sarawak refers).

There would appear to
be little His Majesty
could add to that message
and

So far as we have been
able to trace within time
available it is not
upset not his master for
H.M. to send a message at
instigation of Kelantan
Sultans and ~~we~~
we see difficulties in
asking for an exception
in this case especially as

Distribution:—

14
If ~~it~~ ^{you} feel
and ~~if~~ ^{you} feel
that ~~it~~ ^{were thought} would be

desirable I suggest
reference could be made to
that ~~you~~ ^{arrange} for
arrangements could be made for reference to
that message to be

made.
~~read~~ publicly during

Coronation celebrations this

It does not appear to be usual
practice for the King to send ^(a) message at
installation of Malaya Sultan.

ENDS

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

59726 23
H53)
15
Copy on file

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

Ans by (24)

Code

FROM BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

D. 26th May 1951.

R. 26th " " 06.35 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

No. 16 Confidential

(21) Your confidential telegram No. 17 of 5th May 1951.

Following personal from Malcolm MacDonald.

On arrival in Kuching, I find that a most welcome message from you to the Sultan of Brunei, on the occasion of his Coronation, has come. So far, however, there is no indication of anything from the King. I venture to hope that His Majesty may send a gracious message, for this would give immense pleasure to the Sultan and all his subjects. Abell (who of course agrees with this) and I should be grateful to know whether we may expect to receive such a message. Please reply to the Resident, Brunei.



The cutting below is from.....

dated.....

22
16

Times

2 MAY 1951

176

NEWS IN BRIEF

The King has approved the appointment of the Sultan of Brunei to be an Honorary Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

3 in C. Whiteley
MR. Nield

Distribution: (1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

and return to - (5) Press Section

H 531 (For Sultan of
Borneo file
on return)

For Use of Press Section

This news item is based on a Colonial Office handout.

This news item is based on information supplied by this office.

Logged on.....

(Initials)

17 21

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

59726/50

Code

TO BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

Sent 5th May, 1951. 20.45 hrs.

PRIORITY

No. 17. Confidential.

If you see no objection grateful if you will arrange for the following message to be communicated to His Highness the Sultan at a suitable opportunity during the Coronation celebrations. You may feel that it would be appropriate for the message to be read publicly. Message begins.

On the occasion of your Coronation I send you warm greetings and best wishes for a long and successful reign. May you always enjoy good health and every good fortune. I am sure that, under your wise and benevolent leadership, your subjects will enjoy ever increasing prosperity and that cordial relations with His Majesty's Government will be maintained.

I should like to take this opportunity to let you know that it was with great pleasure that I recommended to His Majesty that he should confer upon you the dignity of Honorary Companion of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George and I offer you my warmest congratulations. Message Ends.

Telegram Draft
TELEGRAM / * *** SAVINGRAM**
• The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

18
21
File No.
59726/50.

To:—

HIGH COMMISSIONER, BRUNEI.

Sent. *body*

20.45 hours.

C.O.

Mr. Nield *21/5/51*

Repeated to:

Mr. Sir Gerald Whiteley *3/5*

Mr. Higham *3/4*

Mr. Blaxter *4/5*

Mr. Paskin *away*

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

S. of S.

Priority

Nil.

Reply urgently required.

Important.

Immediate.

Most Immediate.

To be transmitted:—

In Clear

Code

Cypher

No. *17*

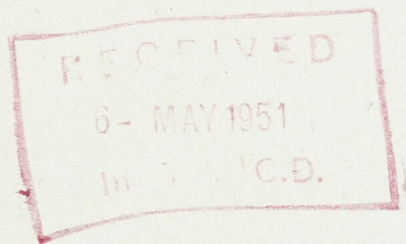
Restricted.

Confidential.

Secret.

Top Secret
and Personal.

High Commissioner Kuching



If you see no objection grateful if you will arrange for the following message to be communicated to His Highness the Sultan at a suitable opportunity during the Coronation *celebration*. You may feel that it would be appropriate for the message to be read publicly, ~~on a suitable occasion.~~

Message begins.

On the occasion of your Coronation I send you warm greetings and best wishes for a long and successful reign. May you always enjoy good health and every good fortune. I am sure that, under your wise and benevolent leadership, your subjects will enjoy ever increasing prosperity and that cordial relations with His Majesty's Government will ~~ever~~ be maintained.

I should like to take this opportunity to let you know that it was with great pleasure that I recommended to His Majesty that he should confer upon you the dignity of

Honorary
Companion

Distribution:—

*Copy for Honours File
26568/110/51*

Further action:—

*Copy for registration
on suitable
Honours File*

Distinguished
Honorary Companion of the most ~~honourable~~ Order of
St. Michael and St. George and I offer you
my warmest congratulations.

Message ends.

SECR.

ORIG on 53002/114/51

20
359726

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Code

TO BRUNEI (British Resident)

Sent 21st April 1951. 12.00 hrs.

PRIORITY

Unnumbered.

Addressed to British Resident, Brunei.
Repeated to High Commissioner, Brunei, No. 14.

Following from Whiteley. Begins.

Dunhills Tobacconists have sought my assistance regarding proposal, contained in Trumble's letter to them dated 5th March, for supply of cigarettes stamped with Sultan's Cipher for Coronation celebrations. They replied 16th March giving estimated charges etc. but have received no reply nor confirmation of order. They have die for Cipher and sample cigarettes are being forwarded by air mail early next week. They now learn that there are no air mail parcel facilities and bulk consignment cannot therefore be despatched ex bond by air mail. Transport could be arranged ex bond by B.O.A.C. Air Freight Service but charges may be substantially higher than rates for parcel service already quoted.

If cigarettes are to arrive in time essential firm have immediate information as to quantities required and whether expense is any object.

Grateful for early reply by telegram. Ends.



21

19

ORIG 58600/50PRIORITYS A V I N G

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the High Commissioner for BRUNEI

NO. 94.

Repeated to Acting Commissioner General, SOUTH EAST ASIA NO. 188.

DATE 28th October, 1950. CONFIDENTIAL.

Commissioner General's Savingram No. 83 to me of 21st August, 1950, repeated to Governor of Sarawak as No. 94, and British Resident Brunei, No. 11.

MacBryan.

I enclose a copy of a letter from the above named which was published in the "Times" on 26th October, 1950, purporting to record the late Sultan's views on the following questions:

- X
- (i) Revision of the treaties between Great Britain and Brunei.
 - (ii) Sums due in respect of the cession of Limbang in 1941, and the Cession of Sarawak to the Crown.
 - (iii) Succession to Sultanate.
 - (iv) Union of Borneo territories. X

It is not intended to take cognisance of the attached letter unless the matter is raised in Parliament. Grateful however for any comments you may have meanwhile. I assume that in fact none of the above questions were ever raised officially with you by the late Sultan.

SECEP.

22 78

PRESS EXTRACT

26. 10. 50.

ORIG 58600/50

BRITAIN AND BRUNEI

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—The sudden death of the Sultan of Brunei last June occurred when he was on his way to London to invite the attention of the British Government to what he regarded as the unhappy political plight of his people and himself. He intended to raise the subject of the revision of treaties between Great Britain and Brunei. Relations between the two countries are primarily governed by an agreement made in 1846 which provides that: "Peace, friendship, and good understanding shall subsist forever between Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and the Sultan of Brunei and their respective heirs and successors." In return for this guarantee the island of Labuan, which commands the entrance to Brunei Bay, was freely ceded to the Crown. The importance of that anchorage may be gauged from the consideration that the American fleet sheltered there after the battle of the Coral Sea.

Other treaties were subsequently concluded, making the State a British Protectorate, the most important of which is one signed in 1906, pledging the Sultan to receive a British Resident as representative of his Majesty's Government under the High Commissioner for the British Protectorate in Borneo. The Resident's advice must be taken and acted upon on all questions, other than those affecting the Mohamedan religion. Since Brunei has never had a written constitution, the effect of the 1906 agreement was to make the Resident virtual Governor of the territory. A State Council of 12 members was established, which included the Resident, but whose president was the Sultan. The council legislates in the name of the Sultan-in-Council. But the Sultan complained that if the views of himself or any member of the council conflicted with those of the Resident he was grimly reminded that the Resident's advice must be taken.

The Sultan intended to protest against the failure of the British Government to pay him the customary tribute upon the recent change

in Sarawak sovereignty and the withholding from him of a sum agreed in 1941 in respect of the Limbang area of Sarawak, terrain annexed by the second white Rajah, and he wished to obtain an undertaking that his only child should succeed him. After satisfying himself that neither Brunei custom nor Mohamedan law precluded the enthronement of female issue, he had anointed her as heir-apparent. The council, on the day of the Sultan's funeral, proclaimed his younger brother as successor. The Sultan advocated the creation of a British Bornean Union. He remarked that his oilfields were the richest in the Commonwealth and that his revenues were flourishing, and he pointed to the political, financial, and strategic advantages that would accrue from a synthesis of Sarawak, Brunei, and North Borneo. Since the Sultan had invited me to advise him while he was absent from his own State and to assume the guardianship of his daughter's interests in the event of any untoward occurrence it is, perhaps, fitting, having regard to his untimely demise, that I should record his views for public consideration. It would be a gracious gesture if his Majesty's Government would concede the reform of the Brunei Treaties, which is long overdue.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

GERARD MACBRYAN.

3, Reform Avenue, Melrose, Johannesburg.

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Code

FROM ACTING COMMISSIONER GENERAL,
FOR SOUTH EAST ASIA.

D. 24th June, 1950

R. 24th " " 13.00 hrs.
(via F.O.)

No. 150 Confidential

Addressed to S. of S.

Repeated to High Commissioner for
Brunei No. 130

" " British Resident Brunei
No. 31.

High Commissioner's telegram No. 103. - 16

MacBryan.

Under Section 47 of Mental Disorders
Ordinance Colonial Secretary yesterday issued warrant
directing that person named should be **received** in the
Colony and conveyed to a special mental hospital.

2. Grateful if you would keep me and the High
Commissioner informed on any adverse press reactions.

(COPY ON 58600/50)

24

38
16

INWARD TELEGRAM.

59726

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

Code

FROM BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

D. 19th June, 1950.

R. 20th " " 08.30 hrs.



No. 36.

Addressed to the S. of S.

Repeated to the Commissioner General No. 103

" " " Resident, Brunei, No. 117.

My telegram No. 33. — ¹¹
59726

MacBryan.

Person named arrived via Labuan on 19th June having flown from Singapore. From the time of his arrival his behaviour was most eccentric and he spent most of his time drinking heavily while staying at rest house. His conversation was, except for very brief intervals, completely incoherent. Local inhabitants terrified of him owing to his mental condition. He made no attempt to see the British Resident or any of the leading Malays. State Medical Officer diagnoses his condition as "an effective disorder of hypo-maniacal type".

2. Attorney General, Sarawak who visited Brunei during MacBryan's stay there obtained a glimpse of four letters in MacBryan's possession which were alleged to have been signed by the Sultan on 1st June, 1950 but MacBryan would not permit the Attorney General to peruse them in detail and he was only able to glance at them quickly and he cannot be sure of the accuracy of his account of their contents as MacBryan kept talking to him in a completely incoherent and nonsensical manner.

3. As far as can be ascertained the documents are:-

(a) a letter referring to MacBryan's appointment as the Sultan's Political Adviser and authorising him when in London to take up with the S. of S. the removal of the "shackles" on the Sultan and his people caused by the treaties with His Majesty's Government.

(b) a letter purporting to appoint MacBryan as guardian of the Sultan's daughter.

(c) a letter stating that the Rajah had no right to cede Sarawak to the Crown and complaining that he, the Sultan, had not been consulted, and that the sum of \$5,000 had not been paid on transfer of sovereignty. Letter authorised MacBryan to take the matter up with the S. of S.

/(d)

(d) a letter concerned with Brunei oilfields complaining that they had been developed to the detriment of the Sultan and his people and authorising MacBryan to take the matter up with the S. of S. If he failed to obtain satisfaction he was to go to America and interview the chairman of the Standard Vacuum Oil Company with a view to that company operating in Brunei.

4. It is not known whether or not these documents bore the Sultan's signature and they have not been presented either to the present Sultan, to the State Council or to the Resident.

5. Tengku Ampuan, widow of the late Sultan, has given the Resident signed statement to the effect that she does not agree to the appointment of MacBryan as the guardian of her daughter.

6. On Saturday, 17th, State Medical Officer certified MacBryan as being of unsound mind and an order was made by a Magistrate for his admission into mental hospital in Singapore. He left Brunei at 16.00 on the 18th in Fisheries Survey Vessel **TENGGIRI** and is due to arrive Singapore noon on Wednesday 21st. All documents required by Singapore law accompany the patient who is under escort.

7. It would have been quite impossible to keep MacBryan in Brunei any longer as no suitable place of restraint exists either there or in Sarawak. Resident therefore adopted best possible course in the public interest and his action has my unqualified support.

copy for 59786

15

26

Original
26635/G/50

OUTWARD TELEGRAM
FROM THE S. OF S. FOR THE COLONIES

Code

TO SARAWAK (Mr. A. P. Abell)

Sent 20th June, 1950. 16.45. hrs.

No.183.

Your telegram No.181 has been laid before the King, who received with much pleasure the loyal message sent to him by H.M. the Sultan Omar ali Saifudin on his accession to the throne of Brunei.

His Majesty asks that an expression of his warm thanks and appreciation may be conveyed to the Sultan, together with his sincere wishes for a long and prosperous reign.

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

INWARD TELEGRAM

59726

14

4531

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

27

AMENDED COPY (Correction * and underlined)

En clair

FROM BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

D. 15th June 1950.

R. 15th " " 13.50 hrs.



No. 35

Following for Whitely. Begins.

Your telegram No. 23 dated 9th June.

Present Sultan, Omar Ali Saifudin, younger brother of late Sultan, was born on 23rd September 1916. Educated at Malay College Kuala Kangsar and member of Volunteer Corps. Attached in 1937 to Forest Department and to Assistant Resident's Office Kuala Belait. Appointed Bendahara (First Wazir) in July 1947 ~~and after~~ death of the late Sultan, following succession procedure was followed in accordance with Brunei custom and treaty obligation.

- (a) Council of Ministers met and unanimously recommended appointment of present Sultan.
- (b) Approval was sought and obtained from High Commissioner on behalf of H.M.G. in accordance with Treaty of 1888.
- (c) A proclamation ceremony was held in the Court House at 2.30 p.m. on 6th June in the presence of Brunei dignitaries and large crowd. Ends.

* Correction received 16th June.

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

14 H 531

28

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

En clair

FROM BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

D. 15th June 1950.

R. 15th " " 13.50 hrs.



No. 35

Following for Whitely. Begins.

Your telegram No. 23 dated 9th June. — 4

Present Sultan, Omar Ali Saifudin, younger brother of late Sultan, was born on 23rd September 1916. Educated at Malay College Kuala Kangsar and member of Volunteer Corps. Attached in 1937 to Forest Department and to Assistant Resident's Office Kuala Belait. Appointed Bendahara (First Wazir) in July 1947 (~~? omission*~~) AFTER death of the late Sultan, following succession procedure was followed in accordance with Brunei custom and treaty obligation.

- (a) Council of Ministers met and unanimously recommended appointment of present Sultan.
- (b) Approval was sought and obtained from High Commissioner on behalf of H.M.G. in accordance with Treaty of 1888.
- (c) A proclamation ceremony was held in the Court House at 2.30 p.m. on 6th June in the presence of Brunei dignitaries and large crowd. Ends.

* Correction to follow.

ORIG 26635/1/G/1950.

13.

INWARD TELEGRAM

29

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Honours

Code

FROM SARAWAK (Mr. A. F. Abell)

D. 10th June 1950.

R. 10th " " 09.45 hrs.

No. 181

On the occasion of his accession to the Throne of Brunei His Highness The Sultan Omar ali Saifudin asks that an assurance of his unswerving loyalty to His Majesty be conveyed to The King.

12
30
OUTWARD

COMMISSIONER GENERAL IN SOUTH EAST ASIA,
SINGAPORE.

EN CLAIR

FROM: COMMISSIONER GENERAL IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

TO: RESIDENT BRUNEI

Mr Malcolm MacDonald

Tel. No. 18

8th June 1950

(R): GOVERNOR SARAWAK Tel. No. 116
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
Tel. No. 55 SAVING

- Addressed to Brunei telegram No. 18 of June 8th repeated for information to Governor Sarawak telegram No. 116 and Saving to Colonial Office.

Following is text of press statement which this office issued yesterday.

Begins:

Omar Ali Saifudin, Duli Pengeran Bendahara and younger brother of the late Sultan, was this afternoon formally proclaimed Sultan of Brunei. This followed a meeting of the Council of Ministers in Brunei yesterday evening when by a unanimous decision the Bendahara was chosen as successor to the throne. The Council's choice was communicated to the High Commissioner for the State of Brunei who this afternoon conveyed his approval on behalf of the British Government. The funeral of the late Sultan took place in Brunei at 2 p.m. today.

Statement ends.

COMMISSIONER GENERAL

Circulation:- COL (5)

59726
EFP.



17 531
11 31
INWARD TELEGRAM.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

Code

FROM BRUNEI(High Commissioner)

D. 12th June, 1950.

R. 12th " " 07.35 hrs.



No. 33 Confidential.

Addressed S. of S.

Repeated Commissioner General South East Asia
No. 93.

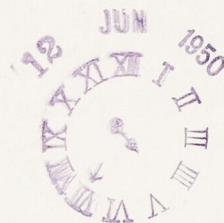
" British Resident Brunei No. 107.

X In view of statement made to Straits Times I am assuming that telegram to Buckingham Palace was from MacBryan. I have received no protest from person-named or any other person concerning choice of State Council of Brunei where selection is according to established custom - and Moslem tenets. I am informed that person-named left Singapore for Brunei yesterday. I would prefer therefore delay my full comments until person-named has seen British Resident and I am informed of his status in the matter and of his complaint.

H 5/30
32

INWARD TELEGRAM
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

COPY FOR REGISTRATION



Code

FROM COMMISSIONER GENERAL SOUTH EAST ASIA

D. 10th June, 1950.

R. 10th " " 19.00 hrs.

No. 141 Confidential.

Addressed to Brunei No. 20.

Repeated " High Commissioner Federation of
Malaya No. 117.

" " S. of S.

2. MacBryan wrote to me on the evening of the sixth to the effect that the proclamation of the new Sultan was unconstitutional, since the late Sultan had nominated his daughter as his heir.

3. Recognising that MacBryan would endeavour to get press publicity for this, I endeavoured to see him at once. He was not available however that evening, so I asked him to come and see me on the morning of the seventh.

4. He then informed me that he held a letter signed by the late Sultan appointing him guardian of Princess Thanku Ehsan. He would not produce this, saying that he would show it to the S. of S. in London. When I told him that I should be seeing the S. of S. later that day and that he could therefore produce the document immediately for the S. of S.'s perusal, he answered that the late Sultan had commanded him to approach the S. of S. on these and other matters in London and that he would therefore faithfully obey the command and wait until London.

5. He had already sent me a copy of another letter which he holds from the late Sultan appointing him the Sultan's Personal Political Adviser during his visit to England. This letter states that MacBryan will assume this position as from 10th June, i.e. tomorrow - several days after the Sultan's death. So even this one is (?not omitted) worth the paper it is written on; the appointment is presumably invalid.

6. In any case, I take it that both these and any similar documents are open to question as unconstitutional, since they were written without any consultation with any of the late Sultan's advisers. However, possibly the Sultan had unqualified powers to appoint a guardian for his daughter and a Political Adviser for himself.

7. MacBryan claims to hold another document declaring that the late Sultan nominated his daughter as his successor; and in the course of conversation he has once or twice added that the late Sultan had already "anointed her" as his successor.

As guardian of the girl MacBryan now therefore regards himself as her champion, and thinks that he will succeed in upsetting the decision of the Council of Ministers and gain the throne for the Princess.

8. This is a characteristic piece of irresponsibility and foolish interference in Borneo affairs by MacBryan, whose conversation is pretty wild and shows signs of mental unbalance.

9. He further claims that the late Sultan entrusted to his care a gold serpent-headed cane and seal of the State of Brunei. He claims that no one can be enthroned in Brunei if the serpent-headed cane does not take its customary part in the ceremony. He actually brought this cane with him when he saw me yesterday, but refused my request that he should hand it to me for safe transmission to the new Sultan whose trust it now presumably is. Three or four times I endeavoured to secure it by persuasion, but he was adamant that the late Sultan had charged him to keep the cane and to do everything else necessary to secure his daughter's enthronement.

10. When I said that if he did not wish to hand the cane to me it was his duty to go to Brunei to hand it back to the proper authorities there, he said that he would probably do this.

11. Needless to say, I urged upon him that he was completely mistaken in the claim which he is urging on behalf of the Princess and that the new Sultan had been properly selected and proclaimed. I fear MacBryan brushed every argument aside and obstinately maintains his thesis. I now understand that he proposes to visit Brunei at once and to proceed to London afterwards for consultations with the S. of S. He has already sent a message to H.M. the King protesting against the proclamation of the new Sultan.

12. In any case we presumably need not take this business too seriously, for MacBryan seems so blatantly in the wrong and is moreover such an irresponsible advocate of the case. But he seems bent on making himself as much of a nuisance as possible.

13. I shall send copies of MacBryan's various communications to me by the next air bag.

34 9

INWARD TELEGRAM.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

Code

FROM BRUNEI (High Commissioner)

D. 9th June, 1950.

R. 9th " " 13.40 hrs.

No. 32.

Addressed to S. of S.

Repeated to Commissioner General for U.K. in
S.E. Asia No. 88.

Repeated British Resident Brunei No. 102.

Sultan of Brunei.

Your confidential telegram No. 22. (3)

X Council Wazirs and Ministers unanimously selected Pengiran Bendahara Omar Ali Saifudin as successor to the throne of Brunei. Selection strongly supported by British Resident and approved by me in accordance with Article 2 of 1888 Treaty. I have no knowledge of any action appointing MacBryan guardian of late Sultan's daughter, nor of the fact that he is stated to be pressing her claim to the succession, and I am astonished to hear that MacBryan was entrusted with the custody of Regalia. I have no comments to offer.

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

59726/50
Code

TO BRUNEI(High Commissioner)

Sent 9th June, 1950 16.15 hrs.

PRIORITY

No. 24 Confidential

Addressed to High Commissioner Brunei
Repeated to Commissioner General South East Asia
" " British Resident Brunei

No. 302

My telegrams No. 22 and No. 23.

Following telegram has been received at
Buckingham Palace. Begins.

May I be allowed to protest at the action your
Majesty's Governor Anthony Abell in Sarawak at having without
your Majesty's command approved on behalf of His Majesty's
Government that a person other than the Sultan's annointed
heir should be proclaimed by the Council of Brunei upon the
direction of the local British Resident the rightful heir is
the Princess Ehsan.

Gerard MacBryan Guardian. Ends.

Grateful for your comments and material for reply.

Draft

TELEGRAM/ *

* ~~SAVINGRAM~~

* The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

File No.

59726/50

To: ~~Lead~~

High Commissioner, Brunei.

Sent.

1615 hrs
9/4/50. hours

Repeated to: ^{9/6}
at once

(1) Commissioner General Singapore.
(2) British Resident Brunei.

No 302

194

Priority:—

Nil.

Reply urgently required.

Important.

Immediate.

Most Immediate.

PRIORITY

To be transmitted:—

In Clear

Code

Cypher

No.

Restricted.

Confidential.

Secret

Top Secret

and Personal

C.O.

Mr. Scott. 9/6

Sir L. Whistley.

Mr.

Mr.

Sir

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

S. of S.

PRIORITY

Higheona Kuehnt
Colon Singapore
Resident Brunei

(3)

(4)

My tels. No. 22 of 8th June and
No. 23 of 9th June 1950.

Following telegram has been
received at Buckingham Palace.

Begin.

[X ————— X on (5)]

Ends.

Grateful for your comments
& material for reply
~~in order that suitable reply~~
~~may be sent.~~

Distribution:—

Geog.
40

Further action:—

Recive to Mr. Scott
for Mr. Kuehnt's min
above 5

MEMORANDUM

● From PRIVATE SECRETARY

To Sir G. Whitely

I am not sure that
E.O.D. 45 of 1968 covers this; it
is hardly a petition. Perhaps
you have precedents in the
MacBryan dossier as to what
acknowledgement we ought
to give?

B. N. Collins

8/6



ROYAL COURT TELEGRAM

SERIAL No.	TIME HANDED IN	OFFICE OF ORIGIN AND SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS	WORDS	RECEIVED AT h. m.	DATE OR OFFICE STAMP
	1345	SINGAPORE			

To

HIS MAJESTY THE KING BUCKINGHAM PALACE

X MAY I BE ALLOWED TO PROTEST AT THE ACTION YOUR MAJESTY'S GOVERNOR ANTHONY ABEL IN SARAWAK AT ^AHYING WITHOUT YOUR MAJESTYS COMMAND APPROVED ON BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTYS GOVERNMENT THAT A PERSON OTHER THAN THE SULTANS ANNOINTED HEIR SHOULD BE PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF BRUNEI UPON THE DIRECTION OF THE LOCAL BRITISH RESIDENT THE RIGHTFUL HEIR IS THE PRINCESS EHSAN

GERARD MACBRYAN GUARDIAN

c.d.
X

B.

Draft

TELEGRAM/ *

*SAVINGRAM

* The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

File No.

59726.

39

To:—

~~High Commissioner~~

High Commissioner

Brunei

Sent. *code*

0830 hours

9.0. 50. 194

Sh.

C.O.

Mr. *Scott.* 7/6

Mr. *Sir G. Whiteley.* 7/6

Mr.

Mr.

Sir

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

S. of S.

Repeated to:—

at me

Priority:—

Nil.

Reply urgently required.

Important.

Immediate.

~~Most Immediate.~~

To be transmitted:—

~~In Clear~~

Code

~~Cypher~~

No. *23*

~~Restricted.~~

Confidential.

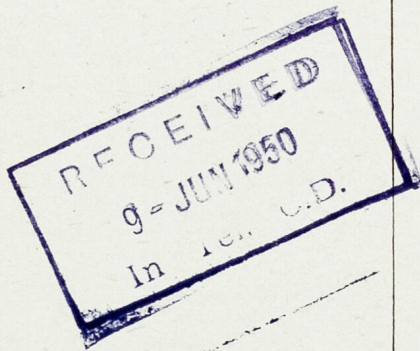
Secret.

Top Secret

and Personal.

(1)

High Commissioner



*Personal from Whiteley.
Your tel. NO. 175 dated
6th June 1950.*

*Grateful if you would
furnish for record purposes
biographical details of
information regarding succession,
new Sultan, and details
of procedure and
customary method of
selection of new Sultan.*

Distribution:—

NOT COPIED

Further action:—

Draft

TELEGRAM/ * *** SAVINGRAM**

* The word Priority may be entered here, if necessary.

File No.

3
40

To:—

Sent. *in code.*

C.O.

Mr. *Sin G Whitchey 8/6*

Mr. *at once*

Mr.

Mr.

Sir

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

S. of S.

Governor
Addressed - High Commissioner for Brunei
Repeated to: (1) Commissioner General Singapore
(2) British Resident
Brunei No.

No 22
2245 hours
No 299
8.6.1945

Priority:—

Nil.
Reply urgently required.
Important. *PRIORITY*
Immediate.
Most Immediate.

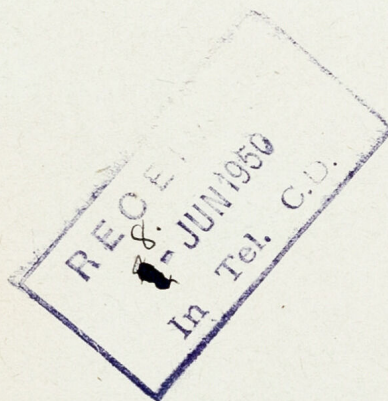
To be transmitted:—

In Clear
Code
Cypher

No.

Restricted.
Confidential.
Secret.
Top Secret
and Personal.

High Commissioner
Colcom
Resident *Brunei*
Singapore



and that MacBryan
was entrusted by late
Sultan with custody
of regalia

Distribution:

REGALIA

NOT COPIED

Further action:—

My telegram
Your telegram No 175
~~*Sensational stories appearing in*~~
Today's Daily Graphic carries
sensational story to effect that
late Sultan of Brunei appointed MacBryan
as guardian of his daughter, & that
MacBryan is pressing her claim
to succession. Should be
grateful for background
information & comments

2 41

News Chronicle

- 8 JUN 1950

PROTEST FOR A PRINCESS

SINGAPORE, Wednesday.
MR. GERARD MACBRYAN,
adviser to the Sultan of
Brunei, North-West Borneo, who
died last Saturday, has cabled to
the King protesting against the
appointment of Omar Ali Saifu-
den, the late Sultan's brother, as
the new ruler.

Mr. Macbryan says Princess
Ehfan (16), the late Sultan's
daughter, is the rightful heir and
that he is her guardian.—B.U.P.

D. H. [Signature]
Sir G. Whiteley.
MR M. Scott.

"Daily Graphic"

- 8 JUN 1950

SOS to the King: Help this little princess

By ALLINGTON KENNARD, Daily Graphic Correspondent, Singapore

A CABLE has been sent to the King from Singapore about a Princess who has lost her throne. It was sent by Mr. Gerard MacBryan, adviser to Sir Ahmed Tajuddin, Sultan of Brunei, Borneo, who died on Sunday. And it concerned the Sultan's 16-year-old daughter, Princess Ehsan.

The Brunei council of ministers has named the Sultan's brother, Omar Ali Sajuddin, as his successor. But Mr. MacBryan says the Princess is the rightful heir.

He said yesterday: "Britain has deprived the Princess of her throne."

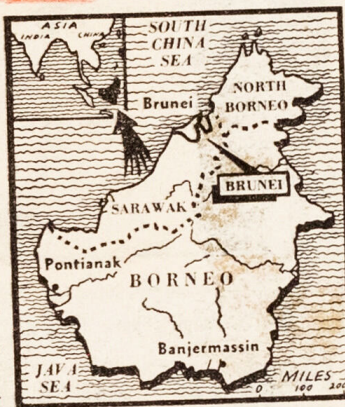
'HER GUARDIAN'

"I have a document signed and sealed by Sir Ahmed appointing me her guardian until she is enthroned."

"I was also entrusted with the Brunei regalia, the golden serpent and cane and seal of State, without which there can be no enthronement."

"Moreover, the Sultan showed me how to use them in traditional rites not known to anyone in Brunei. The golden serpent will soon be on its way to Britain."

Mr. MacBryan's home is at Box, Wilts.



INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES



COPY FOR REGISTRATION

En Clair.

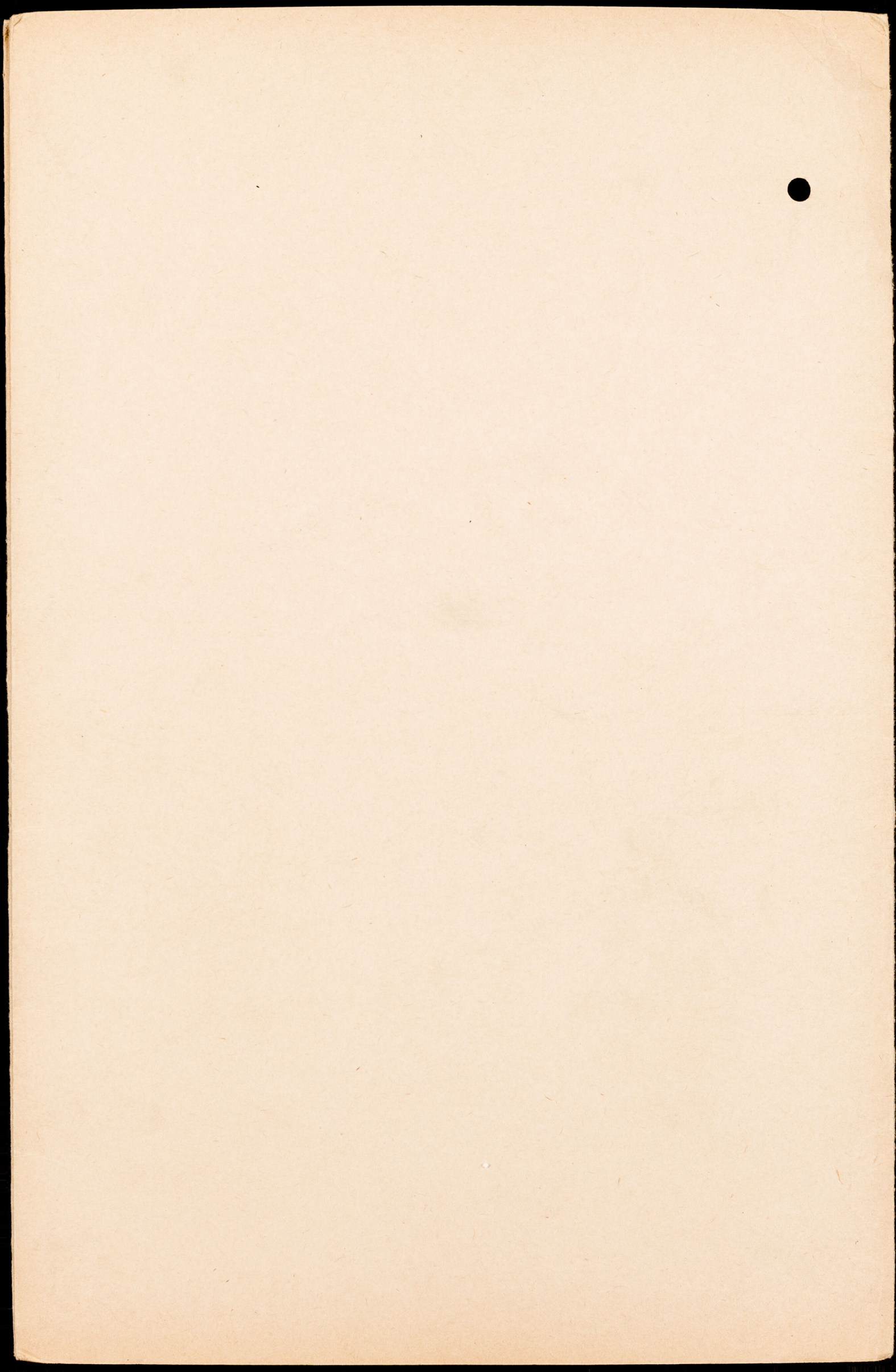
FROM SARAWAK (Mr. A. F. Abell.)

D. 6th June, 1950.

R. 6th " " 12.15 hrs.

No. 175.

Pengiran Omar Ali Saifudin formerly Bendahara
was proclaimed Sultan of Brunei at 2.30 p.m. today.



Sultan of Brunei, Penigiran Omar Ali Saifudin. 1950. MS Records of the British Colonial Office CO 943/2/12. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). State Papers Online Colonial, link.gale.com/apps/doc/ASMEGQ357744701/SPOC?u=omni&sid=bookmark-SPOC&pg=1. Accessed 21 Dec. 2024.